

# AUTOBRIEFS



Photo by Don Ward

Oldsmobile donated \$175,000 to the Oldsmobile Bryant Gumbel/UNCF Celebrity Golf Tournament to furnish academic students with scholarships. The annual event was held in Orlando, Fla. Cornelius Martin, president of the National Oldsmobile Marketing Association and Bill Thompson, Oldsmobile's assistant general sales and service manager, presented a check to Bryant Gumbel. Also shown are two UNCF scholarship recipients: Nabalungi Mack-William of Spelman College (far left) and Bobby Middleton of Voorhees College (far right).

## BLACK COLLEGES RECEIVE MORE THAN \$300,000 IN HONDA ALL-STAR CHALLENGE

Some 64 teams of scholars from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) battled for more than \$300,000 in grants during the 9th Annual Honda Campus All-Star Challenge (HCASC). The tournament was held this year at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla. Modeled after the College Bowl TV program, students are quizzed on a variety of topics, including African-American history, science and religion. The games are open to four-year, undergraduate students enrolled in a black college or university. Honda is the exclusive sponsor of the tournament, and has donated more than \$2 million in grants to HBCUs since 1989.



## DEALER MARKS F-SERIES BIRTHDAY

Ford's most popular selling vehicle, the F-series pick-up turns 50 this year, but hasn't lost its edge yet. The F-Series was first introduced in 1948 and, to-date, 26 million of these trucks have been sold. In fact, for the last 16 years, the F-Series has outsold all cars and trucks of any kind, making it the longest-running, best-selling vehicle in the country.

To celebrate this golden birthday, Nathan Conyers, founder of Michigan's oldest African-American-owned Ford dealership, gave a F-150 to an audience member of the Oprah Winfrey show. Conyers, brother of U.S. Congressman John Conyers, opened his dealership in 1970.

## Buckling Up Saves Lives Black Children Less Likely to Wear Seatbelts

By Reg McGhee

There's an old saying—an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. When it comes to kids and cars that's certainly true.

According to the National Safety Council, automobile accidents are the leading cause of death for children under age 15.

Lack of, or improper seatbelt use was responsible for 2,100 child deaths and another 327,000 injuries last year, making auto crashes more deadly to children than all diseases combined. In vehicles without air bags, the death rate to children drops by 33 percent when kids ride properly restrained in the rear seat.

One particularly disturbing fact reported by the National Safety Council is that African-American youth are 50 percent less likely to buckle up than their white or Hispanic counterparts. The council estimates that African-American youth are being killed or seriously injured in greater numbers because they don't buckle up.

Fortunately, a plethora of educational efforts are being launched across the country, with the National Safety Council and the Big Three automakers among groups sponsoring high visibility campaigns. General Motors is backing the "Safe Kids Buckle Up" campaign, which is distributing a free video along with an informative book on child passenger safety.

Ford is distributing a "Safety Advice" card and a colorful Sesame Street magazine called "Safety on the Road" through their dealerships.

Chrysler, along with other safety-minded organizations, has launched a massive campaign aimed at reaching the nation's school children. An instructional video featuring Public Television children's show host Bill Nye "The Science Guy" and age-appropriate materials are being made available to demonstrate "The ABC's of Air Bag Safety."



A call to the National Safe Kids Campaign (202-662-0600) can produce, "The Back Is Where It's At," an informative packet on proper use of seat belts and child safety restraints.

Stronger seat belts laws are in the works in many states. Studies show that in states with strong "primary" enforcement laws, where officers can stop a vehicle and issue citations for not wearing a belt, seat belt usage is greater, leading to fewer fatalities and injuries.

While concerns have been raised that stronger enforcement laws could lead to police harassment of African Americans, so far this has not been reported. In fact, African-American legislators were leading supporters of recently passed standard seat belt legislation in Louisiana, Maryland and Washington, D.C.

To protect yourself and your family remember:  
*Kids Ride in the Back*—infants should never ride in the front seat of a vehicle with a passenger side air bag and all children, typically ages 12 and under, should ride buckled in the back seat.

*Use Child Safety Seats*—young children and infants should always ride in age and size appropriate child safety seats. Consult the instructions for proper use of these important restraints.

*Wear both lap and shoulder belts*—the shoulder strap should cross the collar bone and the lap belt should fit low and tight. Slipping the shoulder strap under the back or arm is dangerous, especially in vehicles with air bags.

*Move the front seats back*—driver and front seat passengers should move back as far as possible, especially shorter people.